



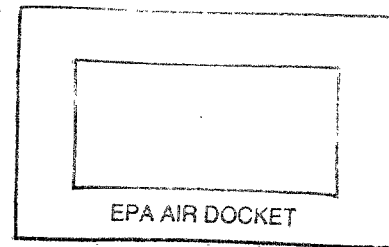
UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue,
Seattle, WA 98101

A99-29
IB-131

July 19, 2000

Reply To
Attn Of: OAQ-107

Honorable Dirk Kempthorne
Governor of Idaho
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0034



Dear Governor Kempthorne:

Thank you for the recent letter from your designee, C. Stephen Allred, Administrator of the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, forwarding your state's recommendations informing your citizens about the area designations under the new 8-hour ozone standard. Making recommendations on geographic boundaries for the national air quality standard for smog is a critical step towards providing the citizens of Idaho with an important tool to make informed decisions about air pollution levels in their cities and hometowns. We intend to carefully review your recommendations and will work with you in determining final designations for your attainment, unclassifiable, or nonattainment areas.

Even though EPA's new smog standard is pending before the courts, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit in its 1999 decision recognized that the designation process would continue. EPA is obligated under the Clean Air Act and the 1998 Transportation Equity Act to complete this process, which includes reviewing your recommendations and making ours later this year.

As a result, EPA is moving forward with the designation process. We are proceeding with this action to protect public health while appealing other parts of the May 14, 1999, D.C. Circuit decision to the Supreme Court. This will ensure that citizens living in nonattainment areas will have cleaner air as quickly as possible once the ongoing litigation is completed. Together we can move forward to bring cleaner, healthier air to the citizens of Idaho.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 206-553-1234 to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles E. Findley".

Charles E. Findley
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: C. Stephen Allred, IDEQ